



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2021

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Charges Brought in Wabash County Poaching Case

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Conservation Police, working in cooperation with Wabash County State’s Attorney Kelli Storckman, today announced multiple felony and misdemeanor charges have been filed against three juveniles as well as Richard Stringfellow, 46, as a result of search warrants executed Jan. 8 near Mount Carmel.

“Charges in this case really run the gambit. They include everything from felony resource theft, unlawful taking of whitetail deer, unlawful use of tag of another person, and unlawful use of a spotlight to felony animal torture, reckless driving, criminal trespass to real property, and unlawful discharge of a firearm from a public right of way,” **said Wabash County State’s Attorney Kelli Storckman**. “Those are just the tip of the iceberg and, unfortunately, most of the charges were brought against juveniles.”

“On Jan. 7, our officers received information regarding alleged poaching near Mount Carmel, Illinois, and across the Wabash River in Indiana,” **said Timothy Tyler, director, IDNR Office of Law Enforcement**. “Our officers worked quickly, notifying Indiana Department of Conservation Police Officers and the local state’s attorney to obtain the necessary search warrants. Upon execution of those warrants, our officers recovered evidence of multiple felony and misdemeanor acts, both in Illinois and in Indiana.”

Warrants executed at the initial residence of a juvenile subject the morning of Jan. 8 uncovered evidence of poaching related to two other juvenile subjects. Additional search warrants were obtained and executed; Stringfellow, as well as the other juveniles, were interviewed with IDNR CPOs collecting hundreds of pieces of evidence.

“At the conclusion of the interviews, the investigating officers found evidence that the three juvenile subjects allegedly killed more than 20 deer in Illinois and Indiana during the 2019, 2020 and 2021 deer seasons,” **Tyler said**. “Further, many of the deer were shot from pickup trucks using spotlights and rifles while others were intentionally run over. Perhaps the most disappointing information our officers discovered is that no meat from any of the deer illegally taken was used.”

IDNR CPOs confiscated eight deer, two rifles, one muzzleloader, one bow and a string of hawk talons. Additionally, the two pickup trucks used in the alleged poaching incidents were seized. More than 55 charges were filed in this case, including felony resource theft, felony animal abuse, falsification of records, unlawful take of deer, hunting by use/aid of a vehicle, spotlighting, hunting deer with a rifle, wanton waste of game meat, shooting from a roadway and transportation of loaded and uncased firearms.

“A case of this size and magnitude requires expertise and cooperation between state and local agencies,” **Storckman said**. “We work – and work well – with our local conservation officers often. I’m pleased to work with them once again to bring charges in this case.”

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